

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

My name is Michael D. Bathrick and I am the CEO and president of BerkshireNet, Inc., in Pittsfield, MA. We began business in 1995 and presently have 2,000 customers, most of whom live and work in Western Massachusetts but we also do a fair amount of web hosting for customers throughout the nation, and have some overseas customers as well.

We offer many services that our local phone company, Verizon, does not. We also helped our local libraries, governments and school systems get online, even before and without the e-rate, and we continue to host their website.

When we opened for business we started, as many ISPs did, with a stack of ordinary dial-up modems and a fistful of phone lines from Verizon. Of course getting phone lines from Verizon was always a problem, and we frequently lost customers when our modem lines became busy because Verizon was late delivering phone lines we had ordered well in advance, lost our hunt groups or had line installation personnel talk customers into using Verizon services instead of ours.

Nowadays we have moved on from ordinary phone lines to digital PRI's (Primary Rate ISDN), and the second a CLEC came to town, we moved all of the business we could over to that company instead. Since then the price has gone down, but more importantly, service has improved.

Unfortunately, I can't say the same about DSL. The CLEC we work with has chosen not to enter the DSL business, and the expansion of some of the

Sincerely,

Michael D. Bathrick
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